(b) In order to prevent and control the spread of HIV/AIDS in India, a comprehensive programme is currently under implemention throughout the country as a centrally sponsored scheme. The main strategies consist of:

— Strengthening Programme management capabilities at Central and State levels.

— creation of awareness amongst high risk behaviour groups and general public about HIV/AIDS.

— Control of Saxually Transmitted Diseases and condom promotion.

— Promoting blood safety and rational use of blood through proper licensing of blood banks and encouraging voluntary blood donation.

— Strengthening capacity for surveillence and diagnosis; and

— Extending training in clinical management of HIV/AIDS.

Demand for Hepatitis 'B' vaccine

1919. DR. M.N. DAS: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that a great demand for Hepatitis 'B' Vaccine has recently been created in our country through propaganda and a fear psychosis has prompted richer sactions of society to go in for it even though the cost of the vaccine is too high;

(b) if so, whether Government have obtained judicious opinion of medical experts and approved of the use of the vaccine; and

(c) if so, what strategy the Ministry has adopted to control or eradicate hepatitis 'B' infection from the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): (a) Hepatitis-B is a public health problem in India where an estimated 3-5% of population or 43 millions people in India may be carriers of the Hepatitis-B Virus.

(b) Hepatitis-B is now a vaccine-preventable disease. Immunisation with available vaccines provides the possibilities of eliminating this virus.

(c) The following measures have been taken to control hepatitis-B infection:

— Mandatory screening of blood at blood banks.

— Health education activities to promote safe sex behaviour under the National AIDS Control Programme.

— Instructions issued to the Health Authorities for use of a separate sterile syringe and needle for each injection.

— Central Government hospitals' personnel at high risk to be immunized. State Governments have been advised to take similar steps.

Excess Thyroid by Consumption of Iodine

1920. SHRI C.O. POULOSE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether excess consumption, that is more than the human body needs of Iodine, cause Thyroid problem;

(b) the reasons for increasing number of Thyroid patients in the country; and

(c) the total number of Thyroid and Goitre patients reported in pre-banned period of iodised salt?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): (a) According to the Indian Council for Medical Research, the optimal requirement of iodine is 150Ug/ person per day. However intake of iodine upto 1000Ug/day is consistent with normal function and is considered safe.